

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in this application.

1. (Currently Amended) A method ~~Method~~ for conditioning semiconductor wafers and/or hybrids having the steps:

preparing preparation ~~of~~ a space which is at least partially enclosed by a container and has a wafer/hybrid holding device which is located therein and has the purpose of holding a semiconductor wafer and/or hybrid; and

conducting conduction ~~of~~ a dry fluid through the wafer/hybrid holding device in order to heat-treat the wafer/hybrid holding device;

said dry fluid being fed into the container and into said wafer/hybrid holding device via a first line and leaving said wafer/hybrid holding device and container via a second line;

wherein at least a portion of the fluid ~~leaving~~ having left the wafer/hybrid holding device is used to condition the atmosphere within the space by being conducted back into the container via a third line.

2. (Cancelled).

3. (Currently Amended) The method ~~Method~~ according to Claim 1, characterized in that the portion is firstly heat-treated and then allowed to flow out within the space.

4. (Currently amended) The method ~~Method~~ according to Claim 1, characterized in that the portion is heat-treated outside the space and then fed back to the space.

5. (Currently amended) The method ~~Method~~ according to Claim 1, characterized in that the portion is allowed to flow out within the space directly after it leaves the wafer/hybrid holding device.

6. (Currently Amended) The method ~~Method~~ according to Claim 1, characterized in that a first portion of the fluid leaving the sample stage is firstly heat-treated and then allowed to flow out within the space, and a second portion is allowed to flow out within the space directly after it leaves the wafer/hybrid holding device.

7. (Currently Amended) The method ~~Method~~ according to Claim 1, characterized in that at least one of the first and second portions can be regulated as a function of the flow rate.

8. (Currently Amended) The method ~~Method~~ according to Claim 3, characterized in that the portion is heat-treated in that it is used for precooling, ~~in particular for precooling~~ the fluid, outside the space before said portion is allowed to flow out within the space.

9. (Currently Amended) A device ~~Device~~ for conditioning semiconductor wafers and/or hybrids having:

an space being at least partially enclosed space by a container and having a wafer/hybrid holding device which is located therein and has the purpose of holding a semiconductor wafer and/or hybrid; and

~~a line device for conducting a dry fluid through the wafer/hybrid holding device for heat treating the wafer/hybrid holding device and for conducting at least a portion of the fluid leaving the wafer/hybrid holding device into the space for conditioning the atmosphere in the space.~~

a first line via which the fluid can be conducted into the container and into the wafer/hybrid holding device from outside the space;

a second line via which the fluid can be conducted from the wafer/hybrid holding device to outside the space; and

a third line via which at least a portion of the fluid can be fed back from outside the space into the space for conditioning the atmosphere within the space.

10. (Currently Amended) The device ~~Device~~ according to Claim 9, characterized in that the line device has:

~~a first line via which the fluid can be conducted into the wafer/hybrid holding device from outside the space;~~

~~a second line via which the fluid can be conducted from the wafer/hybrid holding device to outside the space; and~~

~~a third line via which the fluid can be fed back from outside the space into the space;~~

wherein a temperature regulating device is provided between the second and third lines.

11. (Currently Amended) The device ~~Device~~ according to Claim 10, characterized in that outflow elements are provided at the end of the third line.

12. (Currently Amended) The device ~~Device~~ according to Claim 9, ~~characterized in that the line device has:~~

~~a first line via which the fluid can be conducted from outside the space into the wafer/hybrid holding device; and~~
further comprising a fourth line via which the fluid can be conducted from the wafer/hybrid holding device into the space.

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Currently Amended) The device ~~Device~~ according to Claim 12, characterized in that a valve is provided for regulating the flow rate of the fourth line.

15. (Currently Amended) The device ~~Device~~ according to Claim 10, characterized in that the temperature regulating device has a heating device.

16. (Currently Amended) The device ~~Device~~ according to Claim 10, characterized in that the temperature regulating device has a heat exchanger to which at least a portion of the fluid leaving the space can be conducted.

17. (Currently Amended) The device ~~Device~~ according to Claim 16, characterized in that the heat exchanger is used to precool the fed-in fluid.

18. (Currently Amended) The device ~~Device~~ according to Claim ~~13~~ 16, ~~characterized in that the line device is designed in such a way that~~ wherein the portion leaving the heat exchanger can be fed back at least partially into the space in order to condition the atmosphere.

19. (Currently Amended) The device ~~Device~~ according to Claims 9, characterized in that a further line is provided via which dry fluid can additionally be conducted directly into the space from outside the space.

20. (Cancelled).

21. (New) A method for conditioning semiconductor wafers and/or hybrids having the steps:

preparing a space which is at least partially enclosed and has a wafer/hybrid holding device which is located therein and has the purpose of holding a semiconductor wafer and/or hybrid;

conducting a dry fluid into the space and through the wafer/hybrid holding device
in order to heat-treat the wafer/hybrid holding device;

conducting said fluid from the wafer/hybrid holding device to outside the space;

wherein at least a portion of the fluid which has been conducted from the
wafer/hybrid holding device to outside the space is used to condition the atmosphere
within the space by being conducted back into the space.